

PROBATION SUPERVISION: THREE CONTRACTORS IN PROFILE

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#1. Intervention, Inc., Denver, Colorado

- Private, non-profit organization.
- Established in 1986.

Areas served. Intervention, Inc., provides offender supervision and program services in approximately half of the 22 judicial districts in Colorado. Additionally, the agency provides electronic home monitoring on a limited basis in two other western states.

Offender populations. Intervention, Inc., provides supervision and services to felony, misdemeanor, and ordinance violators (municipal court). Approximately 10,000 offenders are assigned to agency programs, of which 7,500 are probationers. The agency also provides pretrial supervision and manages public service programs. Almost all probationers were misdemeanants prior to 1996. The state's supreme court justice issued a directive that year mandating that offender risk, rather than crime of conviction, be the determining factor for placement in private probation programs. Now approximately one-third of the probationers supervised by Intervention are felons, and two-thirds are misdemeanants. All are lower risk as measured by the Level of Service Inventory (LSI).

Contract management and oversight. Intervention, Inc., has formal contracts with courts or probation agencies in most judicial districts, some established through a competitive bidding process. However, informal agreements exist with several jurisdictions and no formal policy now exists within the state regarding the frequency of opening contracts for competition. Intervention is required to comply with offender contact standards established for probation and non-residential community corrections services. State agencies monitor compliance through periodic audits. Recommendations to revoke or discharge cases are governed by policies established by Intervention, and audits are used to monitor compliance with those policies. State probation staff are not involved in individual recommendations to terminate probation supervision.

Funding. Probation services provided by Intervention, Inc., are supported solely by offender fees. The agency is authorized to charge up to \$35 per month but establishes a sliding scale based on income. Collections average \$22.60 per offender per month. Fees vary for public service and electronic monitoring programs. Intervention's policy is not to recommend revocation solely for failure to pay.

Staffing. Intervention has approximately 100 employees. Caseloads vary from 200 to 250 per caseworker, depending on intake activities provided. The agency also contracts for some specialized services.

Services: Intervention provides the following services directly to offenders:

- Casework management;
- Employment readiness;
- Day reporting/day monitoring;
- Electronic monitoring;
- Public service;
- Brokering/referral;
- Pretrial supervision;
- Presentence investigations;
- Substance abuse and domestic violence evaluations;
- Monitoring payments of economic sanctions; and
- Intensive treatment and surveillance for offenders with multiple substance abuse violations (the Multiple Offender Program).

Outcomes. Intervention, Inc., now reports on outcomes of placements from individual courts and specific offender groups but does not have data on an overall agency success/failure rate.

#2. BI, Inc., Boulder, Colorado

- Private, for-profit business.
- Established in 1978. Initiated private probation services in 1996 through business acquisitions and expansion of services.

Areas served. BI provides primary probation supervision in five states. The company provides supervision support and offender treatment services to public probation/parole agencies in seven additional states through programs such as day reporting centers. These support services are targeted for higher risk felony populations. After an initial business emphasis in electronic monitoring services (now provided throughout the U.S. and in five foreign countries), BI is diversifying into a variety of community-based correctional services.

Offender populations. In the five states where BI provides direct probation services, three contracts involve only misdemeanor offenders. Supervision is provided to both felons and misdemeanants in the other two states, although most cases are misdemeanants. BI provides primary probation supervision to approximately 34,000 offenders in the five states.

Contract management and oversight. BI provides probation supervision through formal contracts with governmental units, usually with county commissioners, county courts, or probation agencies. About 75 percent of the contracts have

been secured through a competitive process. In some jurisdictions, the standards or minimum requirements have been stipulated by the governmental agency in the bidding or contractual process. Where performance requirements are not stipulated, the standards and service levels proposed by BI become incorporated into the contracts. Contractual compliance is monitored by regular reports, inspections, and audits. BI staff make recommendations for case discharge or revocation independently.

Funding. Revenue for BI's probation supervision services comes solely from offender fees. Monthly supervision fees range from \$30 to \$50 per probationer, and BI reports a collection rate of approximately 90 percent of assessed fees. A BI manager indicates that revocation recommendations are rarely based on failure to pay supervision fees.

Staffing. In the five states where BI provides primary probation supervision services, approximately 300 staff are located in 45 offices. The officer-to-case ratio for misdemeanor supervision averages 1:200. No caseloads exceed 250 per officer, and small caseloads are formed for specialized offender populations.

Services. BI offers the following services in programs providing primary probation supervision:

- Case management;
- Life skills training;
- Job readiness/placement;
- "Personal responsibility" classes;
- Cognitive training;
- Anger management classes;
- Electronic monitoring;
- Substance abuse testing;
- Offense-specific group counseling and prevention education;
- Substance abuse treatment and education;
- Sex offender treatment;
- Referral;
- Domestic violence awareness/prevention classes; and
- Management of fee collections and economic sanctions.

BI has developed propriety technology applied to offender assessment, case management and tracking, reporting, and information management.

Outcomes. BI reports that 90 percent of misdemeanor cases are discharged successfully and that the average length of misdemeanor probation supervision is approximately 6 months. ■

#3. Salvation Army, State of Florida

- Non-profit agency.
- Established in 1865.

Areas served. The Salvation Army provides supervision of misdemeanants in 20 Florida counties. By statute, each county in Florida is free to select the method by which misdemeanants are supervised. The Salvation Army has supervised misdemeanants in some Florida counties for 25 years.

Offender population. Supervision is provided only to misdemeanants, who, in Florida, have received sentences of 1 year or less. Florida statute requires state supervision of felony probationers. Most offenders supervised by the Salvation Army are adults, although caseloads include a few juveniles convicted of driving offenses. The total number of offenders under supervision at any given time is about 55,000; there are more than 27,000 new cases each month.

Staffing. The Salvation Army has about 425 corrections employees in the state of Florida. Each counselor is typically responsible for supervising 140 misdemeanants.

Contract management. The Salvation Army provides misdemeanor supervision through formal contracts with each county commission, an arrangement specified by statute. Once the county approves a program contract, the Salvation Army reports only to judges. Contracts are competitively bid every 3 to 5 years. State statute specifies certain minimum standards for supervision, based on court orders. These include requirements such as monthly reporting, collection of fees and restitution, drug testing, etc. However, the Salvation Army has itself modified ACA standards for felony supervision to address supervision of misdemeanants.

Funding. Supervision services are funded exclusively through offender fees. Although the Salvation Army collects only 70 percent of fees owed, offenders are never violated for non-payment of the probation fee.

Programs. The Salvation Army provides no direct programming. Instead, it refers probationers to other agencies for appropriate treatment programs, including job placement, DWI schools, and substance abuse treatment. Those convicted of domestic violence are sent to a provider that uses a Duluth model program for domestic violence, as mandated by statute. These agencies usually charge offenders on the basis of a sliding scale; some also have contracts with the state to offer services to indigent offenders.

Outcomes. At present, the Salvation Army has no reliable data on success or failure of those it supervises. However, with the new institution of computerized records, the agency is developing an outcomes-based evaluation to track offenders' success. ■